

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
PRESS CONFERENCE
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
NOVEMBER 21, 1994

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PROG 11/21/94
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AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC, IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC, IMMEDIATE
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCCC//IMMEDIATE

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (PERRY, WILLIAM), PREL, PARM, AR
SUBJECT: SECRETARY PERRY'S PRESS CONFERENCE -
CIRCULO MILITAR, 11/21/94

OPENING STATEMENT:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MR. CAMILION, AND THANK YOU FOR
HOSTING THIS VERY PRODUCTIVE VISIT. ARGENTINA AND THE
UNITED STATES ARE DEMOCRACIES ALLIED BY COMMON VALUES AND
COMMON OBJECTIVES. AS PRESIDENT MENEM SAID WHEN WE MET
YESTERDAY, WE SHARE SIMILAR PHILOSOPHIES ON POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES. HE ALSO SAID THAT ARGENTINA
AND THE UNITED STATES WILL STAND SIDE BY SIDE IN EFFORTS
TO REDUCE WORLD POVERTY AND PROMOTE PEACE. ARGENTINA'S
ACTIVE COMMITMENT TO PEACE HAS WON THE RESPECT OF THE
WORLD. SINCE PRESIDENT MENEM CAME TO OFFICE, ARGENTINA HAS
PARTICIPATED IN UN PEACE KEEPING EXERCISES IN THE SAHARA,
PERSIAN GULF, CYPRUS, CENTRAL AMERICA, CROATIA,
MOZAMBIQUE, CAMBODIA AND HAITI.

WITH THESE ACTIONS, ARGENTINA DEMONSTRATES GLOBAL INTEREST
AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY. ALL NATIONS TALK ABOUT PEACE.
ARGENTINA WORKS FOR PEACE. ONE PURPOSE OF MY VISIT IS TO

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THANK PRESIDENT MENEM AND THE PEOPLE OF ARGENTINA FOR THEIR HELP IN PROMOTING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE WORLD. I AM PARTICULARLY INTRIGUED BY PRESIDENT MENEM'S PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID WORKERS, A SO-CALLED WHITE HELMET ARMY. WE DISCUSSED WAYS THAT THE UNITED STATES CAN HELP ADVANCE THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT.

DURING MY MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT MENEM AND OTHER CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS, WE ALSO DISCUSSED WAYS TO IMPROVE COOPERATION ON A WIDE RANGE OF IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUES. TO THIS END, MR. CAMILION AND I HAVE AGREED TO ESTABLISH A BILATERAL WORKING GROUP BETWEEN OUR TWO MILITARIES, TO ALLOW US TO WORK CONTINUOUSLY AND EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER. A MORE EXTENSIVE SERIES OF MILITARY EXERCISES AND EXCHANGES WILL IMPROVE COORDINATION ON PEACE KEEPING HUMANITARIAN AID AND EFFORTS TO CONTROL TERRORISM AND NARCOTICS.

I HAVE ALSO INVITED MR. CAMILION TO VISIT ME IN WASHINGTON TO CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR PERSONAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP. DURING MY VISIT, PRESIDENT MENEM ANNOUNCED THE SELECTION OF LOCKHEED TO HELP PRIVATIZE YOUR AIRCRAFT REPAIR FACILITY IN CORDOBA WHERE WORK TO UPGRADE THE A-4 SKYHAWKS WILL BE PERFORMED. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF COOPERATION THAT WILL PRESERVE JOBS AND IMPROVE ARGENTINA'S INDUSTRIAL BASE. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT I CONSIDERED THIS A "WIN" DECISION, THAT IS, IT'S ONE IN WHICH HELPED BOTH COUNTRIES.

ON THOSE INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS, THE MINISTER AND I ARE PREPARED TO TAKE ANY QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT YOU HAVE.

REUTERS: I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THE SECRETARY TWO QUESTIONS: I REALIZE THIS IS ON US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS, BUT I WONDER WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON WHETHER TO THINK THE SERBS HAVE LEARNED A HARSH LESSON BY THE NATO ATTACK TODAY, AND NUMBER TWO, OTHER THAN THE BILATERAL WORKING GROUP, HAVE ANY CONCRETE STEPS BEEN AGREED ON TO ADVANCE THE WHITE HELMET PROPOSAL?

SECRETARY PERRY: I CAN'T SPECULATE ON WHAT THE SERBS' REACTION TO OUR NATO MILITARY ACTION IS, I WILL SAY THAT THE INTENT OF THE NATO MILITARY ACTION WAS TO SERVE AS A DETERRENCE FOR THEIR FURTHER WIDENING OR SPREADING OF THAT WAR, AND PARTICULARLY, WE ARE VERY ANXIOUS THAT THIS WAR IS NOT SPREAD FROM BOSNIA INTO CROATIA, AND WE BELIEVE

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THAT PROMPT AND DECISIVE MILITARY ACTION WAS OUR BEST ACTION AVAILABLE TO US TO DETER THAT SPREADING. THE SECOND QUESTION WAS ON?

REUTERS: IN THE BILATERAL WORKING GROUP, WERE THERE ANY CONCRETE STEPS (GARBLED)...IMMEDIATE... THAT HAVE BEEN AGREED ON TO FORWARD THE WHITE HELMET PROPOSAL FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AID?

PERRY: THE BILATERAL WORKING GROUP IS CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPING CONCRETE ACTIONS ON THE SPECIFIC BILATERAL ISSUES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE TO DO WITH MILITARY EXCHANGES, JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES, JOINT TRAINING, IT HAS ALSO TO DO WITH MATERIEL, COOPERATION MATERIEL, IT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY POINTED TO THE WHITE HELMET OPERATION.

REUTERS: HOW ABOUT ANY AGREEMENT ON STEPS TO BE TAKEN QUICKLY OR IMMEDIATELY ON THE WHITE HELMET PROPOSAL?

PERRY: WE HAD A DISCUSSION OF BOTH IN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON THE WHITE HELMET PROPOSAL WHICH THE ARGENTINES HAD. WE EXPRESSED OUR SUPPORT FOR THAT AND FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ARE GOING TO TAKE PLACE THROUGH THE EMBASSY HERE TO HAVE THE UNITED STATES ASSIST AND SUPPORT ARGENTINA'S INITIATIVE. MAYBE THE AMBASSADOR WOULD WANT TO ADD TO THAT.

AMBASSADOR CHEEK: YES, ON THE WHITE HELMETS, YOU MAY NOT KNOW BUT ...IN ARGENTINA HAVE A RESOLUTION IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN NEW YORK RIGHT NOW, AS OF A FEW DAYS AGO WE HAD ABOUT FIFTY CO-SPONSORS. WE ARE ACTUALLY EXPECTING IT TO PASS OR BE VOTED THIS WEDNESDAY THE 23RD. WE EXPECT REALLY THAT IT WILL BE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY CONSENSUS. THAT IS THE NEXT STEP IN THE WHITE HELMETS BECAUSE IT DIRECTS THE SECRETARY GENERAL, BECAUSE THIS WOULD BE UNDER UN AUSPICES, TO VERY QUICKLY, AS A MATTER OF HIGH PRIORITY, TO STUDY THE ISSUE AND PRESENT A REPORT VERY QUICKLY. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, TO THE UNITED NATIONS, FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL. SO THAT'S WHERE THE BALL IS IN TERMS OF WHITE HELMETS AND WE IN ARGENTINA ARE VERY SUCCESSFULLY WORKING ON THAT IN NEW YORK. THAT WILL BE THE NEXT ACTION OR IMPLEMENTATION PHASE, SINCE IT IS AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT. WE ALSO EXPECT IT TO BE DISCUSSED AT

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THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS AS WELL.

CLARIN: THIS EVENTUAL AID IN MILITARY MATERIEL AND EQUIPMENT THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED BY THIS WORKING TEAM, IF I DIDN'T MISINTERPRET THE MINISTER (CAMILION), WILL IT HAVE A SYMBOLIC PRICE OR WILL IT BE QUOTED ON THE REGULAR MARKET PRICE?

PERRY: TO THE EXTENT THE ACQUISITION OF MATERIEL IS INVOLVED IN THE INCREASED COOPERATION, IT COULD COME IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS. IT COULD COME AS A RESULT OF A STRAIGHTFORWARD PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES. WE DO NOT ENVISION THAT AS BEING THE MOST LIKELY CASE. SECOND AND MORE LIKELY, WE HAVE EXCESS DEFENSE EQUIPMENT RESULTING FROM THE DRAW DOWN OF THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES, AND ARGENTINA IS QUALIFIED TO RECEIVE THOSE EXCESS DEFENSE ARTICLES. IN SOME CASES, THOSE EXCESS DEFENSE ARTICLES REQUIRE SOME MODIFICATION OR REHABILITATION BEFORE THEY ARE USEFUL. SO, SOME EXPENSES ARE INVOLVED THERE. AND THIS GENERALLY WOULD RESULT IN LEASE RATHER THAN PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT TO MINIMIZE THE UPFRONT EXPENSES.

RADIO AMERICA: DURING THESE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE PURCHASE OF EXCESS EQUIPMENT THAT ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN, ARE THERE ANY OBJECTIONS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY GREAT BRITAIN?

PERRY: ALL OF THESE AGREEMENTS AND ALL OF THE SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS MADE WILL BE BILATERAL BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ARGENTINA. THIS A BILATERAL WORKING GROUP AND ALL OF MATERIAL AGREEMENTS WE MAKE ON THAT WILL BE DONE BILATERALLY, BASED ON THE SECURITY INTEREST OF ARGENTINA AND THE SECURITY INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES.

CLARIN: WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC EVALUATION MADE BY THE UNITED STATES, NOW AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR, ON THE MAIN RISK FOR SECURITY IN THE HEMISPHERE?

PERRY: THE BIGGEST THREAT IN THE HEMISPHERE I BELIEVE COMES FROM THE POTENTIAL DANGER FROM INSTABILITY IN GOVERNMENTS THAT COULD BE CAUSED BY A SPREADING OF THE DRUG TRAFFICKING WHICH IS GOING ON IN SOME OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE HEMISPHERE TODAY. THIS IS A INSTABILITY POTENTIAL BECAUSE WHERE THAT DRUG TRAFFICKING HAS BECOME

MOST INTENSE, IT HAS INCLUDED AN INFLUENCE OF CORRUPTING THE INSTITUTIONS AND SOME OF THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. AND IT REALLY THREATENS THE FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY BY ATTACKING THE INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRACY, THE JUDICIARY AND THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES. MANY OF THE COUNTRIES IN SOUTH AMERICA REGARD THIS AS A NATIONAL PROBLEM, BUT IT IS REALLY AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM, AND ONE THAT NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED BOTH REGIONALLY AND ON AN INTERNATIONAL BASIS. AND IN THAT REGARD, THE UNITED STATES HAS OFFERED ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNTRIES THAT ARE MOST AFFECTED BY THE DRUG TRAFFICKING IN TRYING TO HELP THEM DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM AND PARTICULARLY INCLUDING AN ATTEMPT TO STOP THE TRAFFICKING, THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE DRUGS FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY.

SUCESOS DE MONTEVIDEO: DO YOU SEE ANY ACTUAL THREAT FOR HEMISPHERIC SECURITY RIGHT NOW. I MEAN, A SPECIFIC ONE?

PERRY: COULD YOU REPEAT THAT NOW?

SUCESOS DE MONTEVIDEO: DO YOU SEE ANY SPECIFIC THREAT RIGHT NOW FOR HEMISPHERIC SECURITY, AND THE OTHER QUESTION WOULD BE, WHAT DO YOU THINK HOW THE COOPERATION IN SECURITY AND DEFENSE ISSUES SHOULD BE ORGANIZED IN THE COMMISSIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE WHOLE REGION?

PERRY: I SEE VERY STRONG AND POSITIVE TRENDS FOR THE SECURITY IN THIS REGION. IT WAS REMARKABLE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS TODAY THAT WE WERE NOT DISCUSSING BOUNDARIES DISPUTES, OR REGIONAL, OR COUNTRY-TO COUNTRY DISPUTES IN THE REGION. IF YOU COMPARE THAT WITH TEN YEARS AGO, OR TWENTY YEARS AGO, THIS IS A REMARKABLE IMPROVEMENT. AND THEREFORE, THAT THE SECURITY ISSUES THAT WE WERE DISCUSSING IS HOW TO GET BETTER COOPERATION, COUNTRY-TO-COUNTRY, WITHIN THE REGION, TO DEAL WITH FUTURE SECURITY PROBLEMS, FUTURE PROBLEMS LIKE THE DRUG TRAFFICKING PROBLEM WHICH COULD BECOME WORSE IN THE FUTURE. SO WE WERE FOCUSED MOSTLY ON WAYS OF IMPROVING COOPERATION AND SECURITY. I SEE THE TREND, THEN, AS BEING POSITIVE, I HAVE THAT STRONG IMPRESSION, BOTH FROM MY VISIT TO BRAZIL AND MY VISIT TO ARGENTINA.

BUENOS AIRES HERALD: TWO QUESTIONS: ONE IS: IS THERE ANY SPECIFIC AID OR EFFORTS YOU HAVE DISCUSSED REGARDING TERRORISM AND DRUGS, EITHER FIGHTING TERRORISM IN THE

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FUTURE OR WITH RESPECT TO THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE BOMBING THIS JULY AND IN 1992 (ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBING) IN ARGENTINA?

PERRY: I WILL COMMENT AND THEN PERHAPS MINISTER CAMILION WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT AS WELL. WE DISCUSSED TODAY MILITARY DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROBLEM OF TERRORISM, AND TO A CERTAIN EXTENT THE PROBLEM OF DRUG TRAFFICKING. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, PROBLEMS FOR POLICE AND DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, NOT FOR THE MILITARY. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IS THAT OF PROVIDING LOGISTIC SUPPORT, OR PERHAPS PROVIDING SOME TECHNICAL SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT. SO, WE ARE PROVIDING THAT SORT OF SUPPORT TO SOME OTHER COUNTRIES IN SOUTH AMERICA, BUT THE MILITARY ROLE, I EMPHASIZE, IS A SUPPORT ROLE. WE IN THE UNITED STATES DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS APPROPRIATE TO HAVE OUR MILITARY INVOLVED INTO HAVING POLICE FUNCTIONS AND, PARTICULARLY, IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE, THEN, TO HAVE OUR MILITARY INVOLVED WORKING WITH THE POLICE IN ANOTHER COUNTRY. WE ONLY PROVIDE MILITARY AS A SUPPORT ROLE.

NEWSWEEK: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO SENATOR HELMS' STATEMENTS ON SUNDAY THAT PRESIDENT CLINTON IS NOT FIT TO BE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES?

PERRY: I CAN STATE CATEGORICALLY, FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRESIDENT FROM HAVING WORKED WITH HIM ON MANY IMPORTANT SECURITY ISSUES, THAT HE IS A SUPERB COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES.

NEWSWEEK: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON SENATOR HELMS MAKING THE ACTUAL STATEMENT?

PERRY: I THINK THE STATEMENT WAS INAPPROPRIATE. HE IS CERTAINLY ENTITLED TO HIS OPINION ABOUT THE PRESIDENT, BUT IN HIS POSITION AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO MAKE STATEMENTS WHICH MIGHT UNDERMINE A COMMAND RELATIONSHIP SET UP IN THE CONSTITUTION BETWEEN THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND MILITARY FORCES IN THE FIELD.
CHEEK##

Clinton talks of sending GIs to Golan

By Frank J. Murray
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Clinton told Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin yesterday he was ready to take to the American people the case for stationing U.S. troops on the Golan Heights as peace monitors between Israel and Syria.

"I will come to the American people, I will come to the Congress, and I will make the case at that time based on an agreement that they would reach," Mr. Clinton said after an 80-minute Oval Office meeting with Mr. Rabin.

He stressed, however, that "there has been no agreement of any kind about this."

"We are jumping the gun here on this part of it," he said.

Mr. Clinton also assured Mr. Rabin that he will press Congress to maintain aid to Israel at current levels and will endorse new commitments, including money to finish developing the Arrow tactical anti-ballistic-missile system, an agreement to license the export of two supercomputers to Israel and help with unspecified "particular defense problems."

The president's remarks appeared aimed at confronting Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, who is expected to be chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee next year. Mr. Helms said in a weekend television interview that Mr. Clinton is incapable of functioning as commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces.

Mr. Clinton said he will respond at a news conference today to Mr. Helms' charge.

"Tomorrow I'm going to have a more extensive opportunity to meet with the press. I'll be glad to answer all those questions," he said.

Defense Secretary William Perry yesterday called Mr. Helms' statement "inappropriate." He was the latest member of the administration to attack his answer to a question on CNN's "Evans & Novak" program, broadcast Saturday.

Asked if he believes the president capable of leading the military, Mr. Helms replied, "No. I do

not, and neither do the people in the armed forces."

In one point of agreement with Mr. Helms, who supports the current \$3 billion annual aid to Israel,

Mr. Clinton said he would fight to keep that support.

Incoming Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, Kansas Republican, seemed to predict the Senate would go along with that view.

"I would hope and I would guess that at this time of great tension in the Middle East, where we're trying to achieve peace, there wouldn't be any effort to reduce the level of aid," Mr. Dole said as he met separately with Mr. Rabin.

Mr. Helms was not available for comment on possible new peace-keeping duties to which he voiced opposition in Saturday's interview, but a Senate staff member said: "He didn't think much of the idea. ... It is not something that he is going to embrace. He wants to consider it, period."

The staff member reinforced Mr. Helms' support for current levels of foreign aid to Israel.

"The senator does not feel that Israel is one of the foreign ratholes by any standard," the staff member said, using the phrase Mr. Helms applies to foreign aid projects he opposes. "We have to look at Israel in terms of what Israel is worth to us. It is like an aircraft carrier, like a base in the Middle East."

Mr. Helms favors cuts elsewhere, however. When Republicans won control of Congress on Nov. 8, Mr. Helms said, "We must stop this stupid business of giving away the taxpayers' money willy-nilly."

Agency for International Development Administrator J. Brian Atwood, whose agency has been targeted by Mr. Helms, said yesterday that further aid reductions would have a serious impact on the national interest.

"I respect his position. I respect him. But, with all due respect, I don't believe he has changed his position despite the fact that the world has changed," Mr. Atwood said.

Mr. Rabin joined with the president in appearing to pave the way to request a troop commitment in

the Golan Heights by pointing out that U.S. troops have been in the Sinai Desert without a serious terrorism incident for over 15 years. He said the Golan would be even safer.

"The Golan Heights today is the safest from terror because the Syrians keep their commitment under the disengagement agreement of 1974," Mr. Rabin said in a rare Israeli compliment for the government in Damascus.

"No American was hurt [in the Sinai] by any terror activities because it is in an area controlled by the Egyptian armed forces. We work in cooperation," Mr. Rabin said. "No doubt, on the Golan Heights for 19 years we had not one act of terror through the lines between Syria and Israel."

Asked about the possibility of peace with Syria in 1995, the prime minister said: "In accordance to the Bible, all the prophets came from the Middle East. I would not advise anyone to become a prophet."

Mr. Perry's remark about Mr. Helms questioning the president's ability to be an effective U.S. military commander came in a Buenos Aires news conference at the end of a visit to Argentina.

"I think [Mr. Helms'] statement was inappropriate. ... He is certainly entitled to his opinion about

the president, but in his position as the [likely next] chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it is important not to make statements which might undermine the command relationship set up in the Constitution between the commander in chief and military forces in the field," the defense secretary said.

"I can state categorically, from firsthand knowledge of the president and having worked with him on many important security issues, that he is a superb commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces," Mr. Perry said.

When a reporter told Mr. Clinton that Mr. Helms considers the Middle East peace process a fraud, the president replied: "Well, the prime minister has already said the process is not a fraud. It's been quite successful ... and we'll just keep working at it to try to make it work better."

"The peace process has always enjoyed bipartisan support and clearly that will continue," a senior administration official said later, ignoring the objections.

Mr. Rabin said, "There will be obstacles, there will be difficulties, but I believe, with the support, involvement, of the United States, we will achieve comprehensive peace."